UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1999/447
20 April 1999
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

IDENTICAL LETTERS DATED 20 APRIL 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 20 April 1999 from Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq. The Minister calls attention to the violation of Iraq's airspace by United States and British aircraft based in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and to the fact that, in the course of their attacks on Iraq, such aircraft have dropped fuel tanks on populated areas, killing a number of Iraqi civilians and damaging a number of dwellings. He calls upon the United Nations to meet its responsibilities in relation to the ongoing blatant aggression being committed by two States that are permanent members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Identical letters dated 20 April 1999 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

I have to inform you that United States and British aircraft based in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have violated the national airspace of the Republic of Iraq in Qadisiyah Governorate in the south of the country. They dropped a fuel tank in an open agricultural area 3 kilometres from the village of Kufiyayah in Afak district, killing a number of innocent civilians. The aircraft dropped two more fuel tanks in the village of Al Sibahi in the same district, damaging a number of dwellings belonging to residents.

Such criminal aggression against peaceable areas, which is an extension of the continuing military actions being carried out by the United States and the United Kingdom against a steadfast Iraq, has come to constitute an established policy for these two States and one pursued with a view to achieving their political objectives of impairing Iraq's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, terrorizing its peaceable people and openly interfering in its internal affairs in violation of all relevant international covenants and conventions.

In the light of the basic responsibilities assigned to the Organization by the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular of the Security Council's responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, we call your attention to the fact that this brutal aggression against Iraq and against peaceable Iraqi citizens constitutes a flagrant violation of international law. This is a matter that cannot be overlooked or ignored by the Security Council or by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, particularly when those who commit such depredations are States that are permanent members of the Security Council such as those to which the Charter has assigned special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Such flagrant violation on their part therefore undermines and destroys the collective security system enshrined in the Charter and deprives the Organization of any credibility owing to the ongoing aggression and human suffering that afflict many of the world's countries and peoples, including Iraq and its embattled people.

I should further like to state that Iraq reserves in full its right to take whatever measures are necessary to defend its territorial integrity and the security of its people as well as to seek compensation, in accordance with the principle of State responsibility, for all the damage done to it in terms of human, material and other losses by actions that are in violation of the Charter and the norms of international law. Iraq holds the United States and British aggressors responsible for their cowardly actions against its people, and it will continue to defy the no-flight zones imposed by brute force in the north and south of the country.

I request you to have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq